

The racist road to the Edinburgh summit

Secret treaty on refugees

Asylum Bill

Under siege in Paris

Gypsies under attack

Detainees die • Racist murders

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EDITORIAL

The next two months are vital for the anti-racist movement. For, unless we fight the new Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill and a secret European resolution on refugees, due to be signed at the Edinburgh summit in December, they will between them destroy the already-eroded rights of refugees, in a victory for European racism.

In the early 1970s, western Europe shut its doors to the immigrant labour it had used to rebuild its economies after the second world war. Now, 20 years later, it is shutting its doors again, this time on the refugees thrown up in Africa and Asia by the economic devastation caused by multinational corporations, on the one hand, and International Monetary Fundamentalism, on the other.

In Germany, while Rostock burns, politicians unite to dismantle the constitutional right to asylum. In Britain, the new Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill seeks to complete the sealing of the doors begun five years ago when visa controls and fines on airlines blocked the flight of refugees. Now, apart from more 'deterrents' to asylum-seekers – fingerprinting, detention, removal of housing rights – the Bill proposes to deny protection altogether to those currently being allowed into Britain under 'exceptional leave'. They account for 57% of all asylum-seekers to Britain, and over 90% of those allowed to stay.

Worse is to come. At the Edinburgh summit in December, ministers will vote on a secret draft resolution, put forward by the 'Ad Hoc Group on Immigration' of European immigration ministers and civil servants under British presidency. The new resolution proposes to create a racial hierarchy among refugees, disqualifying from refugee status all those coming from outside Europe. Its instructions to those facing persecution are: stay at home and sue your government for human rights violations (imagine the Jews suing Hitler!); hide somewhere in your own country; or find some other country to go to in your own continent. Just don't come to Europe.

For five years, CARF has been at the forefront of the struggle against fortress Europe. But we must now take the fight forward, to create an alternative agenda and a new vision for Europe. Instead of fighting a rearguard battle to stop the worst of European practice influencing all practices, we must demand that the 'highest common factor' of Europe's best practice be applied.

Under the 'Draft resolution on manifestly unfounded applications for asylum' agreed by the Ad Hoc Group on Immigration on 1.7.92:

- those who fear human rights violations should, 'if possible', stay in their own country and seek protection from their own authorities;
- those who have to leave should seek protection in the first safe country they come to: 'intercontinental movements are seldom necessary for protection';
- refugee status is a last resort and should not be granted merely because levels of security, economic opportunity or individual liberty are below European ones.

Under the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill

- asylum will only be granted to refugees whose life or liberty is threatened;
- all asylum-seekers may be fingerprinted, and the police have power to arrest those who do not comply;
- asylum-seekers have reduced rights to housing as homeless persons;
- refused asylum-seekers may appeal; those refused at the airport have two days to lodge an appeal;
- there is a 'fast-track' appeal system for 'unfounded' cases (the appeal must be resolved within 7-10 days);
- visitors and short-term students refused visas or entry to the UK will not have a right of appeal.

Fight these racist laws

CARF reports on opposition to the new Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill and the European resolution on refugees due to be signed at the Edinburgh Summit, and brings news from anti-deportation campaigns.

The provisions of the new Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill, introduced in October, could exclude over 90% of those currently granted asylum in Britain, according to immigration lawyers. And, as such, it is a wholesale attack on the category of 'exceptional leave to remain'. The Bill also abolishes the right of appeal for visitors or short-term students refused permission to come to Britain, or turned away on arrival. It gives immigration officers a completely free hand to indulge their prejudices in the knowledge that they can never be challenged. For some, it will remove the only chance to see their families here—since, if a person is refused once, they will not be allowed another time.

In London, following the successful mass lobby of parliament on 2 November, the Refugees Ad-Hoc Committee on Asylum Rights has called a demonstration on 21 November against the new Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill.

Meanwhile, in Edinburgh, despite a plethora of 'Alternative Summits' organised by left and nationalist groupings, the Scottish Action against Racism and Fascism in Europe has organised on 10 and 11 December the only forums to discuss the new pan-European racism. Whilst CARF is supporting the meetings, we are also writing to the umbrella-organisation 'Scotland United', whose planned meetings focus on 'Democracy for Scotland', to point out that the issue of the secret resolution (see editorial), and the treatment of black people and refugees in Scotland, is vital to any forum on democracy.

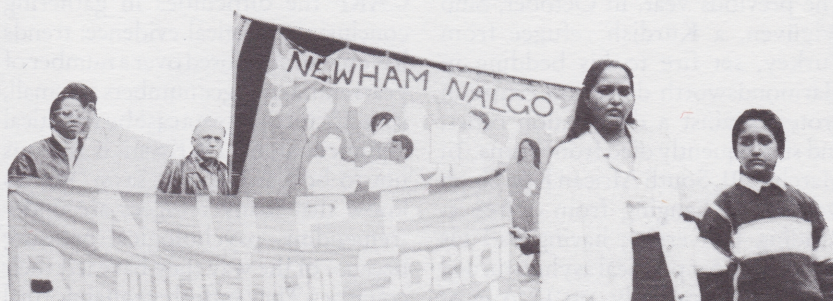
Meanwhile, grassroots organisations are stepping up their campaigns to halt the steady flow of deportation orders issued by the Home Office.

- Strong community support is at hand for the Rahman family from Bolton, threatened with deportation to Djibouti, despite pleas from doctors, health and education workers that Mrs Rahman's cancer and her daughter Shabana's multiple handicaps require treatment here.
- CARF is trying to build London-wide support for a picket, on 24 November, of the High Court called by the West Midlands Anti-Deportation Campaign to stop the

threatened deportation of Prakash and Prem (see *CARF* nos 4 and 9).

- We are concerned to hear that Mamta Chopra (see *CARF* no 9), who now has the backing of her union NALGO, has been refused permission to stay, despite promising talks with the Home Office in June. She is appealing against the decision. ■

For further information on events in Edinburgh contact SAARFE, 11 Forth Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LE. Rahman Family Defence Campaign, c/o Socialist Club, 16 Wood Street, Bolton BL1; Prakash and Prem, c/o West Midlands Anti-Deportation Campaign, 101 Villa Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B19 1NH; Mamta's Anti-Deportation Campaign, c/o ARAFA, 31 Manor Road, Bradford BD1 4PS.



Mark Salmon

Nobody knows his name

The Asylum Bill represents a massive attack on the already scant rights of refugees. CARF argues that the number of suicides occurring in detention and elsewhere across Europe is symptomatic of this rightlessness.

On 13 June, a 30-year-old Togolese man took his life whilst being held in Copenhagen police station. Nobody knows his name, or what fears prompted him to use his belt to hang himself. We only know that the unnamed man was arrested after an identity check and subsequently told by the police that he would be deported the next day.

Protest

The desperation of some refugees was also seen in August, when 20 Africans and Asians, held in a camp outside Budapest for over a year, smuggled out a note to an English-language paper saying that they would commit mass suicide if refused refugee status.

Hungary maintains the right to select refugees on a geographical basis, which means, in effect, that white Europeans receive preferential treatment over black Third World asylum-seekers. The action of the 20 asylum-seekers succeeded, at least, in drawing international attention to Hungary's blatant state racism.

Despair

The despair which leads to attempted suicides is hardly surprising, considering the callous treatment refugees receive at the hands of European officialdom at the point of seeking asylum.

The Dutch organisation 'Refugee Work' recently highlighted the

REFUGEES DEMAND JUSTICE FIGHT THIS RACIST BILL

National demonstration against the Asylum Bill

Saturday 21 November
Assemble 12 noon, Hyde Park
Rally 3pm, Trafalgar Square
Called by the Refugees Ad-Hoc Committee for Asylum Rights (RAHCAR) 071-738 6408

intimidatory tactics used by immigration officers. When an African asylum-seeker said that, if he was sent back to Kenya, he would be shot, one officer replied: 'That is what we do here as well.'

In some cases, asylum-seekers are forcibly deported, says Refugee Work, by being pushed on to planes, handcuffed and with their mouths sealed with tape. The justification the immigration officers give for this barbarous treatment: to avoid being bitten and running the risk, therefore, of contracting Aids.

Suicides of asylum-seekers whilst in British detention centres seldom make the press. In 1987, Ahmed Katangole, a 24-year-old Bagandan, survived a first suicide attempt only to hang himself some three weeks later in Pentonville prison. In June 1990, Kimpua Nsimba, a Zairean claiming asylum, hanged himself in detention. The previous year, in October, Siho Iyigüven, a Kurdish refugee from Turkey, set fire to his bedding in Harmondsworth detention centre in protest against a deportation order, and subsequently died from burns. In March 1991, South African Raaj Singh was found hanging from a tree at Reading University, having had his application for political asylum turned down. Most recently, on 10 August 1992, a Romanian asylum-seeker, Cosma Alexander Axente, hanged himself at his Birmingham home a month after being told by the Home Office that his asylum application had been refused. Unbelievably, the coroner's officer said at the inquest: 'The rejection did not place him under

any undue pressure because he had the right of appeal which would take 12 months or more.' Returning a verdict of accidental death, deputy coroner Christopher Ball said, 'There is no evidence that this man intended to take his life.' Mr Axente was found hanging from the loft.

Increase

Suicides in detention, though, are not the only cause for concern. Ongoing research by the Health and Ethnicity Centre of the North West and North East Thames Regional Health Authority discloses anecdotal evidence suggesting an increase in suicides amongst certain refugee groups – for instance, in the Somali and Ethiopian communities. This is all the more surprising as suicide is a concept largely alien to both cultures.

Dr Karmi of the centre explained to CARF the difficulties in gathering conclusive statistical evidence: trends have to be monitored over a number of years and, as refugee numbers are small, it is difficult to prove a case by statistical argument alone. Dr Karmi is anxious not to be alarmist, but says: 'We do know that many refugees are under tremendous psychological pressure because of the way they have left their countries. They suffer here an abnormal load of anxiety and depression that could lead to suicide. We as a health authority need to be aware of this.'

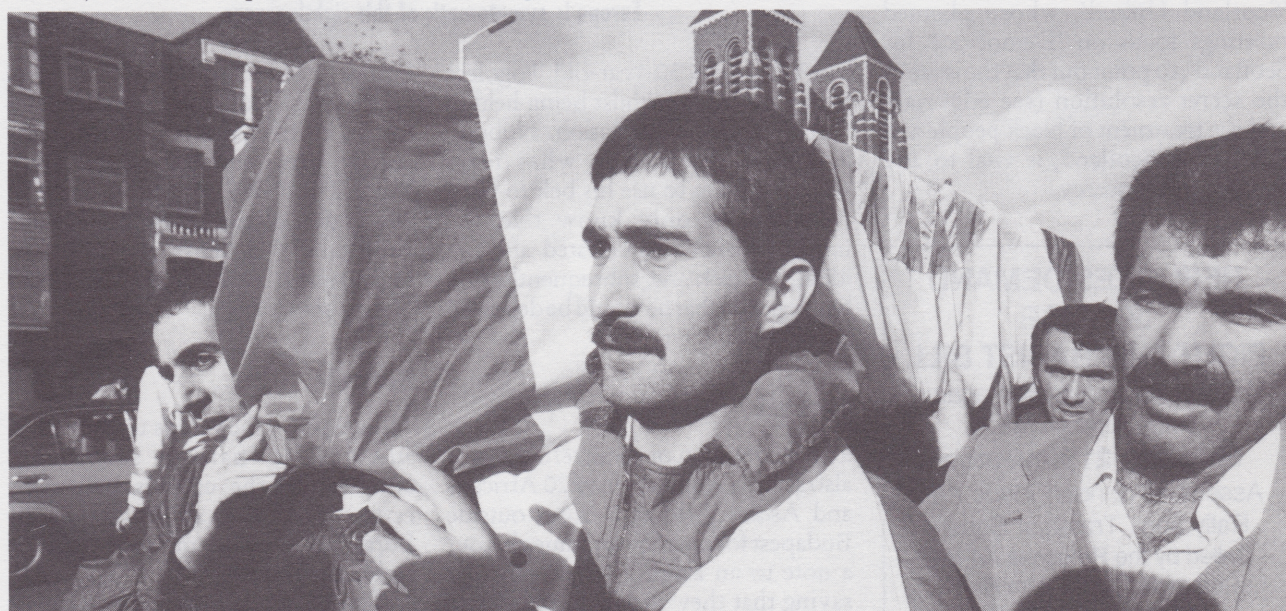
No choice

Meanwhile, as Europe closes its doors to refugees, the Swedish Immigration

Ghanaian refugee Mr A was granted exceptional leave to remain in February 1990. But whilst being held in detention, he was accused of inciting others to riot and to commit suicide, and secretly transferred to a high security prison, where he was held for 10 days.

'When I arrived I was locked up alone in a single cell... I requested to see one of the governors. He came out with my file and told me that I had wanted to commit suicide in Haslar and that I was brought to [this] prison where they wouldn't give a damn about who wanted to take his own life. The governor promised me that they would even provide me with a rope if I wished... The ordeal of my detention is not easy to recover from. Some detainees, after release, continue to fight to regain their normal states. One thing I know for sure; nervousness never leaves you! Before one is granted leave to remain in this country or is deported, one undergoes real mental torture. Are we not faced with a vicious cycle where ex-detainees only add to existing numbers of those in homes for the insane?'

Board has made an announcement, aimed at 3,000 rejected asylum-seekers presently in hiding. Humanitarian reasons to reconsider their cases will now be made more stringent than ever. Indeed, the cases of rejected asylum-seekers will only be reconsidered if there is great risk that they will commit suicide or otherwise damage their health. Is this a sick joke? Is suicide or deportation the only choice available to refugees in the new fortress Europe? ■



Funeral march through London for Siho Iyigüven, October 1989

David Hoffman

Links in the chain of European racism

A small but vocal section of the British Left has accused anti-racists in the UK who speak out against German racism of contributing to an atmosphere of German-bashing jingoism.

Of course we must not foster silly arguments that German nazis are nazier because they are German. And of course, in drawing attention to nazi violence, we must not forget German state racism. And of course we must always bear in mind that Germany actually takes in ten times as many refugees than miserly Britain. Yet with all these caveats, CARF still believes that it is important for anti-racists everywhere to be alerted to the particular rise in German racism and nationalism.

Solidarity

First, events in Germany call for practical actions of solidarity. 'We are a group of refugees coming from different countries', the recently formed network of refugee organisations in Berlin wrote to CARF. 'This government has sent us by force to die in the East. Through fear and ignorance we agreed to take our children there, to be an easy target for the neo-nazis. We are fighting for our right to live, to survive as human beings.'

German refugee organisations are also calling for international attention to be brought to bear on both the neo-nazi violence and the growth in state racism. A refugee worker from Berlin told CARF: 'Not only have military personnel been deployed to facilitate the fast track system of processing applications, but conditions in the camps are fast deteriorating. There are no basic amenities, no translators, no social workers and the authorities are deliberately forcing too many asylum-seekers into the refugee camps so that they look overcrowded.'

In one camp, in Brandenburg, on the Oder-Neisse river (the border between Germany and Poland), 2,100 asylum-seekers have been crowded into a reception centre which normally houses just 1,200, with a gymnastics hall and prefabricated containers being used to accommodate the overflow.

All this is creating a climate of popular racism in which refugees, and increasingly the Gypsies, are

CARF sticks by its position of highlighting the rise in German racism. Here we explain why.

stigmatised as scroungers, thus legitimising the violence. In Bavaria, there is strong local opposition to government plans to house asylum-seekers in prefabricated containers in fields. One farmer told a Radio 4 'Special Assignment' programme, 'Everyone is completely against the idea of asylum-seekers being housed here... They are not political refugees anyway. They just want to take our deutschmarks.'

Speaking with one voice

The second reason why events in Germany are so fundamental for us in Britain is that Europe's immigration policies are now so intertwined, the views of politicians so uniform, that events in one country cannot but shape events in another. And the German experience is being held up by our politicians as the reason why we should clamp down on refugees coming here (never mind that we take a tiny fraction

of the proportion of refugees Germany takes; never mind that the number of refugees seeking entry to the UK is declining). Hence, to the old refrain, 'More refugees, more racism' has been added a new verse: 'If you don't believe us, look at Germany.'

Buying German ideology

Clearly, British nazis are inspired by events in Germany. John Morse, writing in the October *British Nationalist*, called the events nothing short of an 'uprising' and warned that the violence there could 'soon find its counterpart in Britain'. In Austria, racists, inspired by German events, threw molotov cocktails at an asylum centre in Gutenstein, 50 kilometres from Vienna. Politicians from Vienna and Salzburg have seized on this, the first publicised attack on a refugee centre, to argue that no more refugees should be allowed into their territories. Meanwhile, in Norway, Arne Myrdal, leader of the populist 'Norway Against Immigration' organisation, has openly admitted that its members were present at the pogroms in Germany. 'We have first to see how things go in Germany...' he says, adding, 'We must be prepared for the day that the battle



The party was over for these Blood & Honour supporters when they met fierce anti-fascist opposition at the 'Battle of Waterloo' on 12 September. But British nazis are taking heart from events in Germany. And the Blood & Honour network has firm links with the Rock O Rama label based in Bruhl, western Germany, and with bands like Auslander Vernichtungs Kommando (Foreigners Annihilation Squad), Noie Werte (New Values), Störkraft (Disruptive Power) and Endstufe (Final Stage).

in Europe will begin.'

With characteristic shallowness, the UK media have swallowed, hook, line and sinker, the interpretation of events in Germany as seen from Bonn. The *Independent* carried a completely fictitious story, alleging that a local authority in northern Germany was expropriating rooms in council homes for asylum-seekers – which first appeared in the *Bild* (Germany's equivalent of the *Sun*). Furthermore, the analysis of the supposedly liberal *New Statesman & Society* echoed Bonn politicians in arguing 'that only 7% are genuine refugees' and that the system could not cope with so many 'freeloaders' (October's *British Nationalist* also spoke of an 'invasion of freeloaders').

Implications for the Left

State responses in Germany have implications for all on the Left. The German government has maintained that any crackdown will be carried out

on right and left 'radical extremists' alike. (In reality, it is anti-fascists who are being targeted, as the prosecution of Serge and Beate Klarsfeld shows.) When Nazi violence was at its height, the government did nothing to proscribe the Nazi organisations or to deal with the violence. But when left-wing and anti-racist groups moved in to oppose the fascists, banning orders were slapped on both sides. Before, the talk was only of a common or garden 'race war'. Now, it is of civil war. 'This is a stable democracy... If we don't do anything to stop the enormous influx into Germany then the extremes of Right and Left will be strengthened', the German defence minister said on Radio 4.

The fact that most of the violence has taken place in the East has also strengthened the argument that fascism is a product of former Communism. The fact that the western monetarist system and privatisation has left east Germany bankrupt is ignored. Instead, the argument goes that the totalitarian

east German Communist system has left the East ill-prepared to deal with democracy, hence another good reason for the colonial, conquering and exploitative attitude of the West towards the East. Following on from this, we are told that the west German state is liberal, tolerant and free, never mind that its notorious Foreigners' Law makes it virtually impossible for Turks born in Germany to achieve citizenship, whereas 'ethnic Germans' (ie, those not born in Germany but who can prove inherited German blood) become German citizens overnight.

All this may have a particularly German flavour. But, as Maastricht Europe runs recklessly down the monetarist path towards economic union, more authoritarian and right-wing governments are increasingly justified in the name of preserving democracy. As one black German activist told CARF: 'Sometimes I think our major problem is not the Nazis but democracy.' ■

Under siege in Paris

Earlier this year, CARF visited the camp at Vincennes, south-east of Paris where 312 homeless black families – 1,600 people in all – were living in an improvised 'tent city'. On 29 October, with the aim of forced resettlement, the camp was broken up by as many as 1,000 gendarmes, including the notorious CRS riot police. CARF gives the background.

Seven families – some evicted from their homes, some living in slums unfit for occupation – decided to squat an empty building at Fontenay sous Bois, a Communist-run borough. The mayor persuaded them instead to set up camp at Vincennes, on land owned by the city of Paris, to draw attention to the failure of the city authorities to house its own workers. He provided tents and provisions for the families.

Almost immediately after they set up camp, riot police acting on orders from the city authorities tore the tents down. For 10 days the families had no shelter: 'When it rained, we had to cover the kids with dustbin bags.'

As word of the occupation spread, the camp grew from seven to 312 families. They have become well-organised, resisting attempts to force them out.

There are 300,000 people on the waiting list for low-cost accommodation in the Paris region, 80,000 in the city itself. But there is no low-cost housing for them. Associations subsidised by government

specifically to provide such housing have been putting their rents up beyond the reach of low-wage households. Local mayors have refused to take more 'foreigners' in public housing, imposing illegal conditions or 'one for one' policies (whereby foreigners only get housed in housing vacated by foreigners). Very little new low-cost housing is being built. In addition, cheap furnished lodgings are being pulled down to make way for prestige apartments.

Since the 1970s, 'immigrant' workers have campaigned for decent low-cost housing. There were many rent strikes to protest against squalid conditions. Then, at the end of 1986, 110 families, made homeless by an arson attack on their hostel, camped in Menilmontant Square for four months until they won the right to be rehoused. In 1990, 48 families camped in Square de la Reunion for six months and were finally rehoused. In 1991, 103 homeless families, totalling 400 people, camped at the Quai de la Gare for four months until they received housing.

The Vincennes campers were supported by churches, trade unions and anti-racist groups such as MRAP (Movement against Racism and for Friendship between Peoples), and represented in negotiations with city authorities by the CMF (Council of Malians in France). Thirty-five families were rehoused at the end of August, while the others, ordered to leave in September, remain living under canvas and polythene until the police action.

According to a spokesperson for the Vincennes Committee of MRAP, a variety of factors contributed to the break-up of the camp on 29 October, not least the fact that the homeless families were extremely well organised and had repeatedly embarrassed the Paris authorities by drawing attention to the appalling conditions in which many long-settled 'immigrant workers' live.

But pressure from Le Pen's Front National, which carried out at least three demonstrations against the camp, cannot be ruled out either. On 19 October, 200 FN members protested

outside the Ministry of Towns, shouting slogans such as 'Housing for the French - Charters for the Malians' (a reference to the 1986 deportations of 101 Malians who were forced on to a charter plane in chains) and 'We've had enough of Arabs and Negroes'. There are rumours that nazis planned an attack on the camp on the evening of the FN's National Fair which is to be held in Paris in November.

But whether or not this is true, the FN will take heart from the inhuman, degrading and intimidatory way in which the break-up of the camp was carried out. A circle of officers sealed off the camp, preventing anyone from entering, whilst other officers went from tent to tent, removing the families and their scant belongings. The raid, which took place at 6pm, was timed when men were at work, and only

women, children and old people were present in the camp.

CARF will keep its readers informed about the future campaigns of the Malians, many of whom have been resettled in decaying hostels in the outskirts of Paris. As we go to press, it is rumoured that anti-settlement committees have been set up in towns where temporary lodgings have been provided. ■

Trouble on the 'Banlieue'

Following yet another police killing of an Arab youth, an uprising on a French banlieue has gone unreported in the UK. For three nights in October, 200 youths from the Valux-en-Velin suburb, near Lyon, fought pitched battles with the police after 22-year-old Mohammed Bahir was shot dead, whilst allegedly driving a stolen car.

If we think at all of French racism in the UK, it is only to conjure up pictures of a belligerent Le Pen and a triumphalist Front National. Few of us will know anything of the resistance to police racism and official neglect that has gone on over the last decade on those French housing estates with large Arab communities. *Sweet France*, a film by Migrant Media, screened on 12 November in the Channel 4 'Critical Eye' series, puts the record straight.

Young *beurs* (a slang word for Arab) tell of racism in their own terms and, in the process, criticise the sanitised anti-racism of the politically acceptable SOS Racisme movement set up in 1983, with the blessing of President Mitterand. According to Migrant Media, SOS Racisme set out to 'create an articulate integrationist lobby of *beurs*' to 'dispossess the Arab youth of the autonomy they had achieved'.

Much of *Sweet France* focuses on Valux-en-Velin, where Mohammed Bahir was shot, as Lyon (like Marseille) has been at the centre of deteriorating

police-Arab relations over the last decade. Indeed, Valux-en-Velin (which suffers the highest levels of poverty and unemployment in Lyon) witnessed five nights of rioting in 1990 after Thomas Claudio was knocked down by a police car whilst riding a motorcycle.

Now, following more police killings in 1991, Arab youth from Mantes la Jolie, a housing estate near Paris, have launched Caravane 92, which involves groups of youth moving throughout French connecting with youth from other *banlieux*.

*Do you hear at the Assembly,
Roaring the over-excited Le Pen fans,
go into our neighbourhoods,
to assassinate the children of immigrants.
Get armed, citizens, let us form our unity.
Let's march, let's march.
Equality will emerge from unity.*

Sweet France (Channel 4, 12 November, 9pm) from Migrant Media Ltd, 90 de Beauvoir Road, London N1 4EN, tel: 071-254 9710.

Pogroms against Gypsies

Romania, says German interior minister Rudolf Seiters, is now 'politically safe', so the two governments have agreed that Germany will send back most Romanian asylum-seekers, starting at the beginning of November. Estimates of how many people this involves vary – from 26,000 to over 55,000 – but one thing is certain: the majority of them are Gypsies. And Gypsies cannot feel safe.

Since 1990, thousands of Gypsies have fled from Romania, where they make up about 10% of the population, after a series of pogroms against them. But in Germany, they are still not safe from racist violence. The violence in Rostock, where the hostel under siege held Gypsies and Vietnamese, hit the headlines. But hostels all over Germany have seen such racist violence.

But it is not only in Germany and Romania that Gypsies are hated. Two hundred Gypsies recently demonstrated in Prague against racist violence. Since the beginning of the year 12 Gypsies have been killed in racist attacks in Czechoslovakia. In Hungary, in Ketegyhaza, petrol bombs were thrown into the homes of Gypsy families, their horses burnt alive in the stables.

In Britain, too, Gypsies are not immune from racism and attack. And now the government is further encouraging the harassment of Gypsies. It recently proposed that camping without permission become a criminal offence and that the duty on local authorities to provide sites be abolished. This duty, which was won only after a hard-fought campaign in the 1960s, has never been adhered to by many local authorities – and many of those that have supplied sites have put them in desolate areas and with inadequate facilities. But to abolish it, say Gypsies, represents a concerted attack on their way of life. 'A form of ethnic cleansing' is how Paul Mercer, president of the Gypsy National Council, has described it.



Eric Morère/Agence Im media

Racism in special hospitals

A pig's head on a ward to scare patients, 'Love the white race' stickers around the hospital, patients forced to wear placards saying 'Homo' and 'Half brain'. Something from Kafka or Ceaucescu's Romania? No, these were just a few of the abuses at Ashworth special hospital which emerged when Louis Blom-Cooper's inquiry reported last August.

The report on Ashworth portrays a hospital where patients were beaten, taunted and subjected to demeaning abuse and bullying by staff. Staff who protested at the violence and the racism received death threats and harassment.

The inquiry received evidence of BNP materials in the hospital, and concluded that 'the culture of Ashworth nurtures covert and fosters overt racism'. 'Racist attitudes have undoubtedly been fuelled by the activities of a minority of staff who are members of either the BNP or NF', it added.

Too many black inmates

Ashworth hospital (near Liverpool) has three black members in a nursing staff of 800! And yet black people are massively over-represented in the patient population, as they are in most psychiatric hospitals.

It is estimated that young black men born in the Caribbean are 25 times more likely and black men born here five times more likely than young whites, to be 'sectioned' under the Mental Health Act—ie, forcibly removed to psychiatric hospital. The Orville Blackwood Community Campaign believes that 15% of patients at Broadmoor special hospital are of African-Caribbean origin. The black women's group Women In Special Hospitals (WISH) estimates that black women are 5% of the special hospital population.

What is so special?

A special hospital is really a misnomer. Ashworth, Rampton and Broadmoor are, in fact, a cross between prison and hospital. Those who are criminally charged but unfit to plead because they are regarded as insane, and those convicted, can be sent to such a hospital. But a special hospital also houses those who have never been accused of any crime, but who are regarded as a risk to the public and in need of 'special security'. This group, which includes the mentally retarded as well as the mentally disturbed, can serve 'sentences' longer than any prisoner's. It is notoriously difficult to find a way out of special hospitals because release



Orville Blackwood

usually depends upon the subjective clinical judgment of doctors, rather than any statutory yardstick or fixed penalty.

There has been no systematic study of racism in special hospitals. But evidence to the Ashworth inquiry, to the Prins inquiry (on Orville Blackwood's death in Broadmoor in August 1991) and anecdotes gathered by mental Health Commissioners and family lawyers, suggest a whole process of differential treatment for black patients. Black women complain of racism from staff. They are also subject to humiliating strip searches by male nurses, and there have been accusations of sexual abuse by white male staff.

For men, the process is somewhat different. The case description of a black inmate frequently suggests that he is 'a big West Indian male', implying both danger and violence. Staff often confuse one black patient with another, it is claimed, and are indifferent about which case is actually being discussed. They also make stereotypical judgments about a lack of family support of young black patients, which affect possibilities of release.

When it comes to treatment, psychoanalysis or group therapy is rarely on hand for black people. Instead, extreme forms of restraint, sedation by injection and the use of seclusion are too often the rule for black women and black men. Michael Martin, Joseph Watts and Orville Blackwood all died at Broadmoor special hospital following

such 'treatment'. Evidence was heard at the inquest of Orville Blackwood in October 1991 that the syringe injecting him (with three times the recommended dose of Sparene) hit a vein instead of muscle tissue. The drug then led to heart failure. Other black men appear to have died from similarly ill-administered and massive injections.

The power of the POA

After Orville Blackwood's case has gone for judicial review in November, following a long struggle by his mother to reverse the inquest decision of accidental death, the Prins inquiry into Broadmoor will publish its findings. It is likely to demand ethnic monitoring of admissions and treatments as a way of trying to end racism in patient care. But it is unlikely to tackle a fundamental issue, which the Ashworth report skirted round: the institutional role of the Prison Officers' Association (POA).

There are a number of disturbing things about the POA in special hospitals. The union inevitably takes the side of its members when allegations of racism are made. Though not officially condoning racism, it appears never to have disciplined a member on these grounds. And a POA official told the Ashworth inquiry that he believed membership of the BNP was as acceptable for any POA member as was membership of any political party.

The strength of the POA and the antagonism between it and management mean that allegations of racism become a political football in union battles. Where management is weak, the POA fills the power vacuum.

No one has addressed the question vital to the culture of special hospitals: why do nurses of sick people choose to see themselves as prison officers, and opt to be members of the POA (rather than the Royal College of Nursing)?

The revelations of the Ashworth inquiry show us how tarnished is POA trade unionism and how very sick its humanitarianism. ■

Orville Blackwood Community Campaign,
Brixton Community Sanctuary, Talma Road,
London SW2. Tel: 071-924 0913.
Women in Special Hospitals, 25 Horsell Road,
London N5 1XL. Tel: 071-700 6684.

The fight against racism in education

There is a revolt just waiting to happen in our education system. The first intimations of that rebellion are reflected in a growing number of campaigns by school students and parents as the Tory Education Act begins to bite.

Fifteen-year-old Syed Dohan was sent home this summer from George Green school on the Isle of Dogs, east London, by headteacher James Craig, because he had grown a beard. Syed, a Muslim, refuses to shave off his beard because it signals his religious devotion.

This term, Syed finds himself imprisoned in a permanent detention class, kept away from other students – and, he claims, his GCSE studies are now suffering. Tower Hamlets council says it has the power neither to force Syed to shave nor to make the school back down.

Now the Syed Dohan Action Committee, which calls for the sacking of Craig for his 'disgusting, unfair and outrageous punishment' of Syed, is taking legal advice.

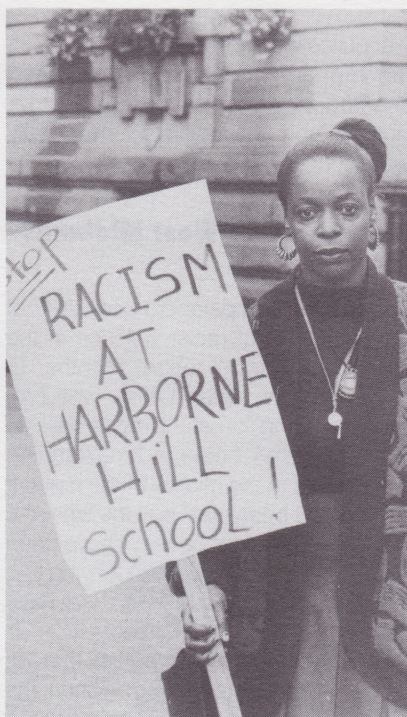
Esther Trill, an African-Caribbean student, had to battle with her Dorset school to allow her to plait beads into her hair. She, too, had been forced to study alone in a photocopying room and underwent two days of suspension before she won her right to 'cultural expression'.

Back to basics

We are back, it seems, to the most basic of struggles in the field of education, having to win all over again the right of different cultures and customs to be accepted as part of a multicultural society.

Other families are having to battle against the exclusion of their children for not having the school uniform – something hard to afford when grants are no longer available to the poor. And yet others face brutality from heavy-handed teachers which smacks of the stereotyping rife in schools of 20 years ago.

In Birmingham, the African People's Education Group was formed after a 13-year-old boy was knocked against the wall by his maths teacher at Harborne Hill school. The community organisation, furious that the child was denied medical attention at school and that no disciplinary action was taken against the teacher, led a demonstration to the town hall on 6 October to call attention to the way that black children



are suffering at the hands of racist teachers and at the high number of black exclusions.

Exclusions increase

For the exclusion of children from British schools has increased dramatically since 1988, and an ever-increasing proportion of those excluded are black. Children can be excluded for anything – from silly behaviour to fighting. And exclusion can take place even after an incident which did not take place on school premises. If a parent or the police reports an incident which occurred at the weekend, a pupil can find himself (it invariably is a he) excluded from school.

● A Nottingham study found that black pupils were four times more likely than white pupils to be suspended from school. Teachers were criticised for interpreting African-Caribbean 'body language' as 'defiance and aggression'.

Once again we are back to 1970s-style arguments about black children being disruptive or exhibiting behavioural problems. Instead of being decanted to the notorious 'sin bins' of

the 1970s, children are now just being excluded – sometimes indefinitely.

● In another Midlands authority, exclusion of all ethnic minority children from 1986-1990 comprised 40% of all exclusions, although they represented only one-quarter of the school population.

● In Sheffield, twice as many children were excluded in 1990 compared with 1988, and African-Caribbean children, who made up 2% of the school population, comprised nearly 7% of all excluded children.

● In Birmingham, where in 1991 9% of the school population was African-Caribbean, black children accounted for one-third of all exclusions.

● In Lewisham, 50% of all primary school exclusions last year were of black children, who comprise 17% of the school population.

Tory 'reforms'

According to a south London school governor who is campaigning against the way that exclusions are being carried out: 'Teachers and headteachers are just giving free rein to their racism. Under the 1988 Education Act, power has been taken away from local authorities and delegated to headteachers. The result is that schools are now getting rid of children without much worry that the local authority will be monitoring them with equal opportunities guidelines and the like.'

Radical educationalist Chris Searle ties the problem of exclusions to the market system of education created by the Tory 'reforms'. 'Schools compete for pupil numbers. Exam league tables are becoming the means, supposedly, of defining the "best" schools. Truancy tables, we are told are another barometer by which parents select the most desirable schools. So the temptation for school managements is terrible and merciless: to choose not to admit, or to permanently exclude, those students who seem to offer only nuisance value.' ■

Help CARF campaign against racist exclusions by sending us any information about exclusions in your school.

Racist murders

Ashiq Hussain, a 21-year-old Birmingham cab driver, was brutally stabbed to death in September after he went to the aid of another driver who was being abused by racists. Meanwhile, in Newcastle, 66-year-old Aziz Miah died on 14 September, three weeks after being battered by a racist gang on his way to mosque. These deaths bring the toll of racist murders to seven this year.

But racist murders have not gone unchallenged. As we go to press, anti-racists are preparing to march through Greenwich in support of the Rohit Duggal Family Campaign. The Panchadcharam Sahitharan Memorial Committee, with the support of the Newham Monitoring Project, has been picketing the Old Bailey where Gary Hoskins, accused of murdering Mr Sahitharan, faces trial. In Birmingham, Mr Hussain's funeral procession was attended by hundreds of local people and over 7,000 cab drivers. Birmingham CARF is working with Ashiq Hussain's family to establish a memorial committee to keep his memory alive.

And in Newcastle, the murder of Mr Miah has galvanised black youth, Asian and African-Caribbean alike, to form the Mr Miah Justice Campaign and publish a newsletter, *Kal Ki Awazz* (Voice of Tomorrow). An angry demonstration, which marched from the estate where Mr Miah lived to the police station, a week after his death, was a 'watershed' in black self-organisation in Newcastle. 'Since the demonstration... the phones have not stopped ringing... Brothers and sisters who are active in similar justice or defence campaign in different cities have said they are with us', said a spokesperson for the campaign.

Neils Michael Neilson has been arrested and charged with Mr Miah's murder, but campaigners are anxious

that police inquiries do not stop there. In Birmingham, three men have been charged in relation to the killing of Mr Hussain and anti-racists will be closely monitoring the trial.

Attacks in the West Midlands increase

Birmingham campaigners told CARF of the escalation of racist violence in the West Midlands in recent months. In September, an Asian family, who had been suffering constant racist harassment, had their home in Kingstanding firebombed in the middle of the night. If no one had been awake at the time, the family would almost certainly have been burned to death. Police are denying that the firebombing was racist, and have charged someone with arson.

It is not just gangs of racists that the black community is fighting. In June, the Ahmed family were allegedly assaulted and racially abused in their own home by police 'investigating a noise complaint'. Three brothers were arrested and charged, and their 61-year-old mother suffered a cut arm after being pushed by police. Later, she was arrested when she went to the station to enquire about her sons. A few weeks after that, police again forced entry into the family home and, the family say, shook awake a 4-year-old child to ask her where her father was,

causing her to have a seizure.

The Sandwell Action Committee Against Racist Police Harassment has been organising regular pickets of the court where the Ahmed brothers are standing trial, and has presented a 2,000-name petition to the council demanding a public inquiry into the treatment of the Ahmed family.

Other attacks reported to CARF include:

- An Asian student from Longsight, Manchester, attacked by a gang armed with baseball bats.
- An Asian teenager losing the sight of an eye after being shot at point blank range, in Sudbury Hill, west London
- An arson attack on the Surma Centre, home of the Bengali Workers Action Group, in Camden, north London. ■

Sandwell Action Committee Against Racist Police Harassment, c/o Sandwell REC, High Street, West Bromwich.

Birmingham CARF, PO Box 1854, Camp Hill, Birmingham B11 1NJ.

Mr Miah Justice Campaign, c/o 262 Westgate Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4

Sahitharan Memorial Committee, c/o NMP, 382 Katherine Road, London E7.

Self-defence arrests

Once again, the victims of a racist attack have found themselves arrested along with their attackers. On 3 October, some Latin Americans were drinking in the Fishermen's Arms in north London, after a demonstration. A group of white men began to harass them and, when the landlord refused to call the police, Adolfo Olachea, of Sol Peru Committee, went outside and called them from a phone box. As he spoke to the police, he saw his friends being driven out of the pub by the racists. The police told them to wait till they arrived. But, by the time the police came, the white youths had taken to beating the Latin Americans – who had defended themselves from the attacks as best they could. Despite the fact that the Latin Americans had been the victims of this attack, and that one of the group had actually asked the police to prevent it, the members of both the white and Latin American groups were charged with affray. ■



Mark Pinder/Metaphor

Angry demonstrators in Newcastle following the murder of Aziz Miah

Fascists: lack of progress report

National Front

Although the NF had 78 people at its Birmingham AGM, all is not well. In a recent *Vanguard*, Chair Ian Anderson indulged in a thinly veiled attack on Steve Brady and Tom Acton for being too close to Western Goals – a surprising attack, as one strand of Anderson's strategy is to make the NF as respectable as possible. The NF attempted in the summer to organise 'Instant Response' activities. So far, little has occurred, but a watchful eye needs to be kept, both on them and on disgruntled Blood & Honour activists, annoyed with their rout at Waterloo station in September.

Blood & Honour

According to the Notts Anti-Fascist Alliance, Blood & Honour and the BNP are stepping up their activities in the Stapleford area of Nottinghamshire. Reports have recently been received of racist intimidation against the Asian community and of neo-Nazi gigs in local pubs. Local Labour councillor Harry Patterson has been threatened on numerous occasions. In the Mansfield/Ashfield area, KKK activity is in evidence and threats of violence against anti-fascists are commonplace.

British National Party

The BNP might have managed to hijack Church House, Westminster, for this year's AGM, but its leaders are presently more concerned with matters financial. After a successful prosecution by Merton Borough Council for putting up stickers without permission, the BNP is now attempting to raise £2,000 to cover the legal costs of an appeal. In a BNP internal newsletter, members have been ordered not to place stickers on council property – and, just in case they get itchy fingers, *British Nationalist* and *Spearhead* are no longer advertising stickers for sale.

Resignations, recriminations, regrouping – all this characterises the far Right today.



The far Right is stepping up its surveillance of anti-fascists. A new broadsheet, *Target* (the Voice of Pro-Fascist Action), gives thanks to the 'League of St George's Arrow Research and Information Service and Combat 18's Redwatch Team' (for 18 read initials AH, Adolf Hitler, geddit?). Although the nazi's information is far from impressive, anti-fascists are warned to beware.

Western Goals

For all the hype, Western Goals, which is said to be in severe financial difficulties, has not been able to take control of the 2,000-member Monday Club (rumoured to be the beneficiaries of a £30,000 legacy), has no regular publication, and has not organised a single public event this year. Could those dropping out of the NF provide Western Goals with the organisers they so desperately need? The 'European Book Society' was formed in the summer, dedicated to popularising 'the ideas of radical conservatism' (and selling off the more palatable remnants of the old *Vanguard* stock retained by Steve Brady and Tom Acton). Brady denies Western Goals membership, but, whether true or false, this is increasingly irrelevant, since Western Goals has been somewhat compromised by two recent events – A V R Smith's rumoured and Gregory Lauder-Frost's actual presence at David

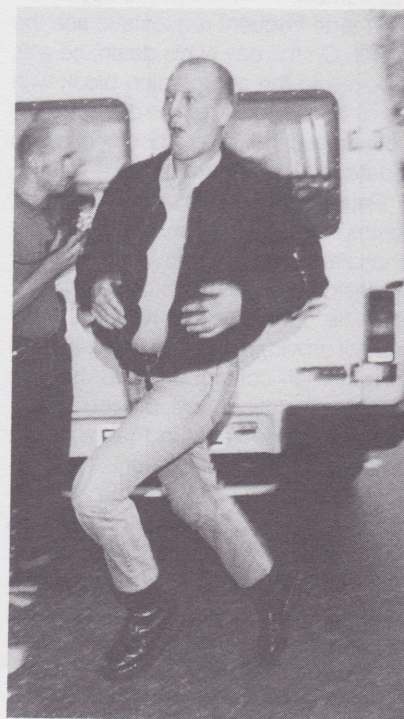
Irving's 'Revisionist Seminar' in September, and Nick Griffin's reported attempts to join.

International Third Position Network

The International Third Position Network, with which Nick Griffin and Derek Holland are associated, has been having problems recently. In Northern Ireland, some activists have defected to the BNP, hence the non-appearance of ITP's publication *Ulster Dawn*. ITP organisation in the North of England is effectively over, *Northern Rising* long defunct. Elsewhere, the 'Welsh Distributist Movement' has been engaging in energetic poster-campaigns worthy of the Rosicrucians, and its *White Eagle* publication is still produced regularly. In England, some ITP units (eg, Kent) have formed the more populist 'English Nationalist Movement'.

Third Way

Harrington's Third Way has adopted a low profile, apart from 'Greenwave', but has encouraged activists to get involved in campaigns against European union, as well as setting up – in conjunction with Greenwave – an alternative information telephone line, to cover stories 'suppressed' by the mainstream media. ■

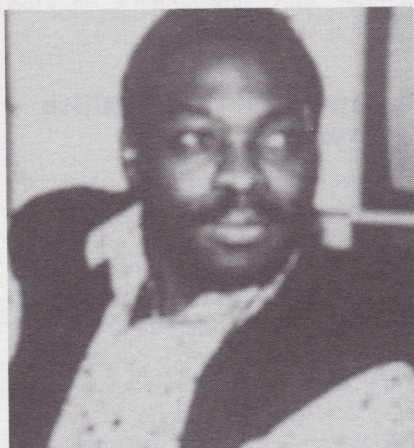


Local by-election results

Rekendyke, South Tyneside	David Rumney (BNP)	20 votes	1.7%
Millwall, Tower Hamlets	Barry Osborne (BNP)	657 votes	20%
Netherton, Dudley	George Cartwright (NF)	39 votes	1.7%
Perry Hill, Lewisham	Gerrard Dickson (NF)	34 votes	1.4%
Central Twickenham, Richmond-upon-Thames	Jeremy Bedford-Turner (NF)	40 votes	1.8%

INQUEST

Three black deaths in prison.



Omasase Lumumba

An inquest into the death of Zairean asylum-seeker Omasase Lumumba was adjourned in September until February 1993, because the coroner had not allocated enough time for all the witnesses to be heard.

Omasase died an apparently violent death on 8 October 1991 in Pentonville prison after being restrained by prison officers. A relative of Patrice Lumumba, Omasase, like many of his family, had suffered persecution and harassment in Zaire, and he was awaiting a decision on his application for political asylum.

While in prison, his mental and physical condition gave cause for concern. He was confused, withdrawn, refused food and made frequent requests to see the doctor. On the day of his death, he was removed to the segregation block with the use of 'control and restraint' techniques, and when a doctor came to sedate him, he was found to be dead.

Dates for inquests into two other black deaths have yet to be set. A 30-year-old Ghanaian prisoner has died in HMP Swaleside. After his first suicide attempt, when he cut his wrists, Kwaku Ohene was not provided with support, care and more human contact. Instead, he was put into isolation and placed under surveillance. He was found hanging from the bars of his cell on 13 June 1992.

On 3 July, Errol Commuck, a 24-year-old man, was found hanging in Winson Green prison – a prison which Judge Tumin, Inspector of Prisons, recently condemned for its grotesque conditions, overcrowding and inadequate medical care, particularly for the mentally ill. ■

This column is contributed by the organisation 'Inquest', 300 Seven Sisters Rd, London N4 2PJ.

Corruption at Stoke Newington

Aseta Simms, Michael Ferreira, Colin Roach ... the names speak of the long association which north London's Stoke Newington police station has with allegations of racism, violence and malpractice.

Hackney Community Defence Association statistics show that Stoke Newington's reputation has not changed. In 1990, 141 cases alleging police malpractice were reported to the organisation. Out of the 76 it dealt with, 55 were from black people. In 30 cases, people were injured, in 11 cases seriously enough to go to hospital.

The local community's fears over Stoke Newington police station have been borne out by recent developments. Earlier this year, eight officers from the station were moved to new duties elsewhere following allegations of drug dealing. The complaints, which are being investigated by the anti-corruption squad at Scotland Yard as part of 'Operation Jackpot', relate to the reselling of drugs seized by police on the street, the fabrication of evidence, and the beating of suspects. A ninth policeman had already been moved from the station, and a tenth, Gerrard Carroll, killed himself with his service revolver.

In June, two of the policemen, DC Ronald Palumbo and PC Bruce Galbraith, were suspended after being named in the House of Commons. A third officer was suspended in September.

So far, about 10 appeal cases and five civil actions involve allegations of criminal activity by Stoke Newington police. In June, a Shadwell man had charges of possessing drugs withdrawn because of prosecution concern about the credibility of police evidence.

But no one knows for sure how many

prosecutions might be tainted by the involvement of discredited policemen. Twelve firms of solicitors and 19 barristers have written to the Director of Public Prosecutions, Barbara Mills, complaining that the Crown Prosecution Service, which she heads, was not disclosing information revealed by the Scotland Yard investigation. Without the information it is impossible to tell which prosecutions are unreliable.

The investigation into racism and corruption at Stoke Newington is long overdue. But we should remember previous efforts to clean up the Metropolitan Police, like Operation Countryman in the 1970s, which, while achieving a few prosecutions of 'small fish', failed utterly to root out corruption and completely ignored police racism.

Hackney Community Defence Association has produced a pamphlet on police crime in Hackney and Stoke Newington, *A crime is a crime is a crime*, and is preparing another report, *Fighting the lawman*, on some of the cases under investigation in 'Operation Jackpot', which will be available shortly. ■

HCDA can be contacted at: Colin Roach Centre, 10A Bradbury Street, London N16 8JN. Tel: 071-249 0193.

Justice for Trevor Henry

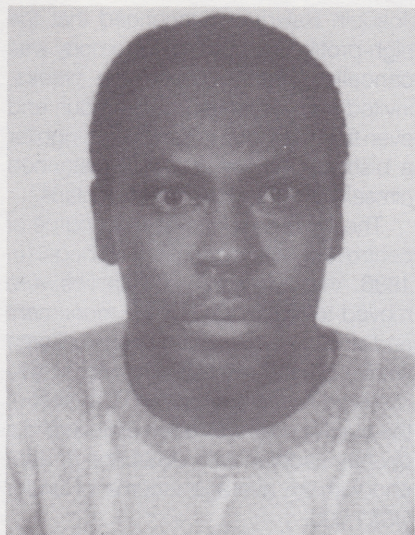
On 17 April 1991, a Lewisham woman had acid thrown in her face during an attack by two men. She suffered terrible injuries. She was never able to identify her attackers. Some two months later, on 12 June 1991, Trevor Henry was arrested. Now he is serving a ten-year sentence in Belmarsh High Security Prison for a crime he did not commit.

During the course of the investigation, the charge Trevor faced was changed from grievous bodily harm to conspiracy, which requires far less evidence to secure a conviction.

There was no forensic evidence that Trevor was involved in the attack, no evidence from witnesses to prove his involvement. The prosecution suggestion that Trevor had access to acid in his printing business was disproved when it was shown that his printing processes did not use acid or acid-based fluids.

In addition, during the trial it emerged that the woman had been threatened before, in January 1991, by two men, one





of whom she knew. No police investigation of these threats was ever carried out, despite the obvious conclusion that someone different had a motive for the attack.

Now Trevor's application for an appeal has been turned down. But with the help of his partner, Sharon, he is fighting back. With new lawyers, he is petitioning the Court of Appeal again for leave to appeal both conviction and sentence.

The campaign will be organising around the legal steps being taken:

- It will lobby the Court of Appeal.
- It is petitioning the Home Secretary.
- It will be holding a public meeting to galvanise the feeling in the community against the injustice Trevor and his family have suffered. ■

Justice for Trevor Henry Campaign, 192 Evelyn Street, London SE8 5DB. Tel: 081-692 1308

■ Black dentist dismissed

Raj Mistry ran two successful dentistry practices in Loughborough and Nottingham until last May, when his name was erased from the professional register after appearing before the General Dental Council, accused of professional misconduct. The Raj Mistry BDS Support Group says that the case highlights the treatment meted out to black dentists by their own professional body, instigated by racist envy from rival practitioners.

Raj Mistry was charged with delegating x-rays. This, says the group, is a widespread practice, and two white dentists charged with the same offence were let off with a warning. The group also cites the cases of seven Asian dentists struck off for various offences, while 11 white dentists on similar or graver charges were either 'suspended' (in two

cases) or allowed to continue practising.

Research done by the group into the activities of the all-white General Dental Council shows:

- Only 7% of dentists are black, yet 30% of the cases before the GDC are from this group.
- The sanctions imposed on black dentists are much harsher than those on their European counterparts.
- Self-governing bodies such as the GDC are exempt from the Race Relations Act.

The Raj Mistry BDS Support Group is demanding that the GDC rescind its decision and that he be allowed to resume his 4,000-strong practice without further victimisation. It is also calling for a public investigation into the apparently discriminatory practices of the GDC and for the setting up of an independent body to monitor GDC activities.

The Raj Mistry BDS Support Group urges people to support its picket at 9am on 18 November of the Privy Council offices in Downing Street where Raj Mistry's appeal is to be held. It also wants people to write to minister of health Virginia Bottomley, to petition other MPs and to raise the issue with their own dentist and with local organisations. ■

Raj Mistry BDS Support Group, PO Box 3, Loughborough LE11 1NT.

■ Isle of Dogs

Following the Millwall by-election, and the increase in physical harassment of the Bangladeshi community during the BNP's election campaign, 'The Island Against the Nazis' has been formed, the immediate priorities of which are to leaflet local estates and establish a Bangladeshi Families' Support Network. Afsana Yahiya, who works on the Isle of Dogs, in east London, reports on the situation.

In the last six months, the Isle of Dogs has seen an upsurge in the number of racial attacks, ranging from verbal abuse to physical assaults.

In October, for example, a group of children attending Koran class were verbally abused and intimidated – and this was not the first time. On another occasion, the local halal grocers had a pig's head thrown through the door.

Bengali tenants are regularly subjected to taunts of 'fucking Pakis go home'. The predominantly white population seems intent on driving the Bengalis out – and is given further support by the 'Island Action Group for Equality', made up mainly of local residents, which also goes under the name of 'Rights for

Whites'. What is significant is that this group is given a platform to air its propaganda at the council's race forum.

The Isle of Dogs holds a race forum every three months, its main purpose being a consultative mechanism for ethnic minorities. However, RFW has dominated the last two forums I have attended with its threats and racist abuse. What's amazing is that all this abuse takes place in the presence of councillors, neighbourhood officials and the police – all of whom are apparently powerless to take action.

The group's sole reason for attending, apart from abusing every black person there, is to hammer away at the local (Labour-controlled) neighbourhood offices, especially at the housing department. When an official complaint was lodged as to how the race forum was conducted, both the police and council's response was that it was a public meeting and, therefore, they couldn't prevent anyone from attending.

It is no wonder that, against this kind of defeatism, racism breeds. In such a climate, there must be a mobilisation of resources to fight the racists, especially in the light of the recent by-election held here, where the BNP came third with 657 votes. This indicates a potentially dangerous situation, possibly resulting in the BNP gaining an even more secure political foothold in this area. ■

STOP PRESS: Following the latest race forum meeting, a member of the 'Rights for Whites' campaign has been arrested and charged with malicious wounding.

The Island Against the Nazis, c/o Island House, Roserton Street, London E14 3PG.

■ Children need rights

A campaign has been formed to stop the government getting away with an attempt to legitimise racist practices among children. Immigration and nationality laws and practices currently split black children from their parents, make British-born children stateless and disregard the needs of refugee children.

Britain has now signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children, but has refused to sign those parts of it which would force it to change these practices. The Children's Legal Centre is among 18 organisations currently organising the campaign to get other European governments to put pressure on Britain to sign the whole Convention, and drawing attention to the fact that for the British government, only white children have rights. ■

The Children's Legal Centre, 20 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN, tel: 071-359 9392.

Remember Biko

'The most potent weapon in the hands of the aggressor is the mind of the oppressed' – Steve Biko, 1971

The 15th anniversary of Steve Biko's death has passed largely unnoticed. CARF commemorates his life and his death.

Steve Biko died in police detention on 12 September 1977, 25 days after his arrest. During his detention, he was kept naked in leg irons and handcuffs before five days of intense physical torture and interrogation. The inquest ruled that the police could not be held responsible for his death, despite a mass of evidence to the contrary. He was the 46th political detainee known to have died in detention in South Africa.

Steve Biko was a founder of the South African Students' Organisation and leader of the black consciousness movement. SASO pioneered the unity of Africans, Coloureds and Indians as blacks against the white oppressor. It stated that 'the concept of black consciousness implies the awareness by the black people of the power they wield as a group, both economically and politically, and hence group cohesion and solidarity are important facets of black consciousness'.

At first, the black consciousness movement had little contact with the black

working class. But it was a planned meeting between Steve Biko and representatives of the ANC which brought about his final detention and subsequent murder. A month after his death, 19 organisations, including all the black consciousness groups, were banned (the first such organisational bannings since 1960), and many activists detained and banned.

In South Africa today, people are still being arrested and detained; many are still dying in detention (97 so far this year). The organisations may be unbanned and change is certainly taking place, but many more will die before South Africa is truly free. ■

Columbus killings

Two people, including a young human rights lawyer, were shot dead by police in the Dominican Republic in September as they protested against official celebrations of the Columbus quincentenary. The killings galvanised popular opposition to the Dominican government's plans to celebrate the event with the inauguration of a US\$250m Columbus lighthouse in the capital, Santo Domingo (see CARF No 4).

After a week of rioting, President

Joaquín Balaguer announced that the high-profile inauguration ceremony was cancelled. In the preceding weeks, invited dignitaries had backed out, and even the Pope, due in Santo Domingo for a bishops' conference, had distanced himself from the government's plans.

The lighthouse has been a source of controversy since construction began in 1986. An estimated 25,000 families were moved to make way for the monument and other 'beautification' schemes. Some were violently evicted and most have received no compensation. The cost of the building has also been criticised in a country saddled with US\$4.5bn of debt and with an average income of under US\$1,000.

The shooting on 20 September of Rafael Efraín Ortiz, head of the Dominican Committee for Human Rights, was followed by another death in the town of Azua, when a youth was shot by police. Days before, the armed forces minister had bluntly warned protesters: 'He who dares attack or disturb the public order may have to pay, even with his life.'

The cancellation of the ceremony represents a defeat for President Balaguer, who has dominated the Dominican Republic since the death of the notorious dictator Trujillo in 1961. Yet the lighthouse remains as a grotesque symbol of distorted priorities and an insult to the people whose lives it has ruined. ■

Report by James Ferguson, author of *Dominican Republic: beyond the lighthouse* (Latin American Bureau, £5.99).



■ BURNSALLS STRIKERS FIGHT ON Asian women at Burnsalls, a metal finishing company in Smethwick, have been on strike since June for union recognition after they joined the GMB in protest at health and safety conditions in their factory. One worker suffered a miscarriage after her request to be transferred to lighter duties was turned down. Community support in Smethwick has been strong, with over 300 people attending picket lines on Saturdays. The GMB has called a demonstration and rally in support of the strikers in Smethwick on Saturday, 28 November. As Kuldip Dhalwal, one of the strikers, told CARF: 'We're not going to leave the picket line till we win.'

Send messages of support to the strikers, c/o Jo Quigley, GMB, 2 Birmingham Road, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3HP

Good signs for CARF

The last few months have been very positive for CARF. In September, we appointed our first full-time worker, so that we are in a much stronger position to give support to campaigns and provide speakers for meetings.

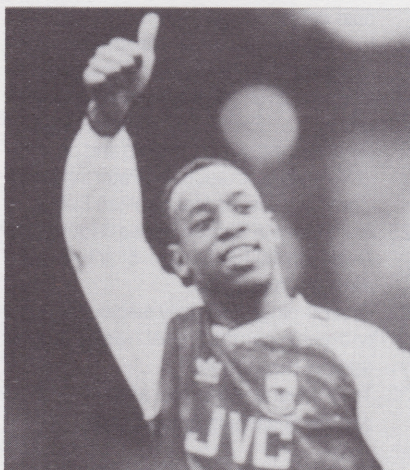
There have also been positive developments in Scotland. In September we addressed a fringe meeting on the Asylum Bill at the Scottish National Party conference in Perth (the conference reiterated its total opposition to the Bill) and spoke in Edinburgh at a discussion on the rise of racism and fascism organised by the Democratic Left. We also ran a workshop on racial harassment at a conference on the need for black housing associations organised by the Glasgow-based Housing Equality Action Unit.

In November CARF spoke at an international symposium in Germany organised by the Nuremberg Action Group Against Racism. We also took part in a pan-European women's conference on nationalism and identity, held in Prague. ■

SPORT

Racism on the terraces

One recent advance for the cause of anti-racism within football has been the fact that terrace racism is now an accepted topic for discussion in the popular press. Last year, we had the Ron Noades affair; more recently, we've seen the tabloid story surrounding Arsenal striker Ian Wright. However, the newspapers' claim that Wright faced racist abuse from Wimbledon fans has been vigorously challenged. CARF gives the background.



Gary who?

Throughout September, it was impossible to ignore the controversy – if you didn't read the tabloid accounts of the abuse Wright faced, there were always the billboards and TV adverts of Wright saying 'Gary Who?' to remind you. The Wright affair has shown that racism is up for debate in football, but it has also raised some wider questions.

What is clear is that racist abuse still exists within English football, although it is in decline, thanks to strong campaigns by fans, and belated action by clubs. Most recently, Glasgow Rangers, after complaints from fans, has warned that it will take action against any fans guilty of shouting racist slogans. Arsenal manager George Graham has indicated likewise.

Ian Wright courageously spoke out on last year's 'Great Britain United' TV programme, and speculation has it that Crystal Palace chairman Noades' comments on the same show drove Wright to leave for Arsenal.

The burden that black stars like Wright have to bear was graphically shown at September's Coca-Cola cup game between Millwall and Arsenal. Wright was hit by a coin and faced a barrage of racist abuse from some Millwall fans. Millwall's own Community Officer, Gary Stempel, condemned his fans for 'the most

venomous racial abuse that I've heard for five or six years'.

But it is less clear what happened at an early season game at Selhurst Park. Wright claims that he faced racist abuse from Wimbledon fans, but *Grapevine*, Wimbledon's fanzine, says that although he was abused, it was not on racial grounds. *Grapevine's* view is that Wright is disliked by Wimbledon fans because of obscene gestures he made to them at a game last season, something he apparently repeated this season. It states that racist chanting by groups of fans is virtually unheard of at Wimbledon, and would be condemned by other fans if it did occur.

The conclusion of the Ian Wright affair seems to be unclear. CARF would welcome views on this, especially from Arsenal fans, who may have been at the games in question. ■

David Widgery

It was with sadness that we learnt of the death last month of David Widgery. For 20 years he was a socialist activist and doctor in the East End of London, where he will be remembered for his work against racism and fascism. *CARF* was amongst those papers which benefited from his committed investigative journalism in the 1970s. As his last book, *Some Lives: a GP's East End*, testifies, he remained till his premature death at 45, a unique fighter against oppression.

REVIEW

No double punishment!

Andy Anderson had lived in Britain for 12 years, was married and had three British-born children when he was convicted of possession and supply of cannabis. After he had served his sentence, he was served with a deportation notice. He was told that his deportation was necessary since, as a Rastafarian, supplying drugs played 'a significant part in his scheme of things'. His deportation was averted after a strenuous campaign.

People like Andy Anderson find themselves at the sharp end, where the racism of the criminal justice system and of the immigration laws converge. The Campaign against Double Punishment grew out of the fight against that racism, and its pamphlet, *No immigration laws: No double punishment*, came out of its first national conference, held in February 1992.

As well as describing in detail the discrimination that prisoners awaiting deportation are subjected to – loss of home visits, of parole, prolonged detention after serving their sentence, in addition to the 'double punishment' of deportation itself – the pamphlet shows how people can support the prisoners practically and take the campaign forward. ■

No immigration laws: No double punishment can be obtained, price £3.00, from the Campaign Against Double Punishment, The Old Library, Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester M8 7SN. Tel: 061-740 8600.

UPDATE

Tyne & Wear Anti-Fascist Association • The Crown Prosecution Service has dropped its BNP-prompted investigation into TWAF's general election campaign. Meanwhile, South Tyneside council has refused to take action after revelations that BNP candidates duped people into signing their nomination papers, claiming that 'it is not the duty of the returning officer to investigate the authenticity of signatures'.

William Weekes • Campaigners in Manchester have succeeded in their efforts to stop William being deported to Montserrat. William was threatened with deportation after he inadvertently became an 'overstay' because of a simple administrative mistake (see *CARF* no 10). Sukhdeep Singh, of the William Weekes Defence Campaign, told *CARF* that the high level of protest was a key factor in forcing the reversal of the deportation order.

Leicester RAMP • Legal advice has been taken by the Racial Attacks Monitoring Project after funding was withdrawn by the local authority (see *CARF* no 9). RAMP are currently considering whether to seek a judicial review of their funding situation.

Mike Smith • Mike Smith, who was threatened, racially abused and assaulted by police officers outside a Wolverhampton nightclub (see *CARF* no 10), has been cleared of two charges of assaulting police and one of violent disorder, after 16 police officers gave differing evidence at his trial. Mike has lodged a complaint with the Police Complaints Authority about his treatment, and is prepared to bring a private prosecution if necessary.

Cardiff Three appeal • Yusef Abdullahi, Tony Parris and Steven Miller have finally been granted an appeal. It is set to start on 7 December, four years to the day after the men were arrested for the murder of Lynette White.

AUGUST

- 22 Somali refugees ignored by health and welfare agencies, says Tower Hamlets council report.
- 24 About 500 anti-fascists demonstrate outside BNP by-election meeting in Bethnal Green, east London.
- 25 Neo-nazis fight riot police for fourth consecutive night after attacking central refugee centre in Rostock, Germany.
- 26 Arson attack on Sikh temple in Woolwich, south London.
- 27 Mosque in Greenwich, south-east London, ransacked and set alight.
- 28 HIV-positive Ugandan asylum-seeker dies in prison hospital after doctors at Gatwick airport allegedly said he was faking his illness.

SEPTEMBER

- 2 West Midlands police creates three new serious crime units.
- 5 Police report difficulties in getting black people to participate in identity parades ... Suicide rate among younger Asian women in Britain is nearly three times the average, says psychiatry journal report.
- 7 Home Office refuses asylum to two Chinese supporters of the pro-democracy Tiananmen Square demonstrations.
- 9 Three charged with petrol bomb attack on Blackburn home in which 12-year-old Dildar Khan suffered serious injuries.
- 11 Home Office criticised for treatment of Naheed Ejaz, who is detained after deportation of her and her 4 British-born children is delayed.
- 12 44 arrested at Waterloo station, London, when anti-fascists clash with Blood and Honour concert goers ... Two Yugoslav children badly burned in arson attack on refugee hostel near Heidelberg, Germany.
- 13 Foreign minister Douglas Hurd, describing large-scale migration as 'perhaps the most serious problem' confronting Europe, says Britain, facing 'a very considerable commotion' in the 1970s over immigration, 'dealt with that problem and we don't wish to see it return'.
- 14 Lawyer describes prison sentences (the maximum being 4 years) on 5 neo-nazis who kicked and beat Angolan immigrant Amadeu Antonio Kiowa to death in 1990, as 'an encouragement of right-wing radicals to continue their deadly campaign of violence'.
- 16 CRE report confirms that black people, especially African-Caribbeans, are treated more harshly by the legal system.
- 18 Indian mother given no time to say goodbye to her children before being deported as illegal immigrant after appeal fails.
- 19 Judge bails Dennis Tulloch, convicted of drugs offences on basis of evidence of east London's Stoke Newington police.
- 20 Talk by revisionist historian David Irving

- at his old school cancelled after parents protest.
- 21 Government concedes that immigration officials mishandled case of Zairean stowaway by denying him opportunity to claim asylum.
- 22 Appeal court cuts sentence of black teenager convicted of wounding white racist after being targeted for violence and abuse by Nazi Turnout group, which was involved in death of Rolan Adams in south London ... Bail granted to nine defendants charged with murder of Ruhullah Aramesh in Thornton Heath, south London on 2 August.
- 24 Donna Awadat, serving 3 years for arson, found hanged in psychiatric unit of London's Holloway prison ... Ida Oderinde, convicted of drug offences by Stoke Newington police, given bail pending appeal proceedings.
- 25 Appeal court quashes murder conviction of battered wife Kiranjit Ahluwalia, who killed her husband after years of violence.
- 29 Department of Health admits that it has neglected the health needs of ethnic minorities.
- 30 Refugee organisations attack Home Office decision to refuse asylum to Somali woman, who was raped and beaten, so she cannot bring her children to UK though they are in grave danger.

OCTOBER

- 1 Asylum applications doubled to over 45,000 in 1991, according to Immigration and Nationality Department.
- 2 Labour party conference delegates attack Tory plan to resurrect Asylum Bill.
- 6 German government brings in military personnel to help process asylum applications to speed up deportations of those that do not qualify.
- 7 Tower Hamlets education authority pays £27,000 to Asian school inspector in return for his withdrawing racial discrimination claims.
- 12 Metropolitan police pay Frank Critchlow £50,000 over claim for false imprisonment, battery and malicious prosecution after 1988 raid on Mangrove Club in London's Notting Hill, but deny allegations.
- 13 Germany's governing coalition agrees to amend constitution to toughen asylum provisions, by allowing immediate expulsion of those with 'clearly unfounded' claims.
- 15 Evidence that convicted M25 Three 'seriously flawed', says TV programme ... Thames Valley police chief Charles Pollard says justice is 'a game'.
- 16 Tamil asylum-seeker to be deported to Sri Lanka despite UN advice that such deportations unsafe ... Senior police officer calls for compulsory ID cards throughout Europe.
- 18 Neo-nazis attack refugee hostel near Quedlinberg, beating Vietnamese men, sexually assaulting women.

- 19 Headteachers association calls for ban on racist badges, graffiti and abuse from classrooms.
- 20 Protesters picket trial of Gary Hoskin accused of murder of Tamil refugee Panchadcharam Sahitharan ... Society of Black Lawyers accuses Bar of race discrimination towards black student barristers.
- 22 Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill re-introduced in parliament ... Secret European proposals to stop Third World refugees getting into Europe leaked ... Arthur Olukoton-Williams wins £20,000 damages for strip-search and false arrest by British Transport Police.
- 23 Rostock authorities to prosecute anti-Nazi couple Beate and Serge Klarsfeld for protest against deportations to Romania ... David Irving refused entry to Canada over 'alleged criminal background' ... Paul Condon, who headed enquiries into Southall 1979 and policing in Notting Hill, to succeed Peter Imbert as Commissioner of Metropolitan Police.
- 25 BNP meets in Church House under name Anglo-Baltic Exchange; 5 anti-fascists arrested in clashes.
- 27 First Birmingham family evicted for son's two-year campaign of racial abuse against neighbours.
- 30 Tony Deane wins his appeal against charge of assaulting the police.

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